WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Full-fledged banking functions by Postal Department

*321. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Posts has approached RBI to grant it licence to convert its Savings Account into a full-fledged bank;

(b) if so, the number of its branches in the country, which would perform such functions, State-wise;

(c) whether the staff deputed for performing full-fledged banking duties would be paid suitable scales as given to the staff in the public sector banks; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir. The Department of Posts has not approached the Reserve Bank of India to grant it license to convert the Post Office Savings Bank (POSB) in to a full-fledged bank as the POSB is an agency function carried out by the Department of Posts on behalf of the Ministry of Finance under the provisions of Government Savings Bank Act, 1873.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Upgradation of Lengpui airport

*322. SHRI LALHMING LIANA: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Mizoram has submitted any project proposal for development/improvement/upgradation of Lengpui airport; and

(b) if so, the details of the project proposal and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In 2003, the State Government of Mizoram had submitted a project proposal to NEC for upgrading Lengpui airport at an outlay ot Rs. 10.99 crores. Rs. 6.58 crore was sanctioned by NEC in 2005 and NEC has released a grant to the State Government of Rs. 5.92 crore as NEC's 90% share of the expenditure. Componentwise details of the project are given at Statement-I (*See* below).

The State Government has again submitted proposals to NEC for upgrading Lengpui airport during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Details of these projects are given at Statement-II (*See* below).

Owing to limited budgetary allocations for NEC, and the fact that Eleventh Five Year Plan proposals are yet to be finalized, as well as huge committed liabilities, on